

External Complaints Procedure

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The University of Wales Trinity Saint David welcomes constructive feedback on its activities, whether positive or negative, and recognises that, from time to time, people or organisations external to the University may feel their expectations have not been met by the University, its staff or its students.
- 1.2 The University welcomes feedback in Welsh or English and will respond to such feedback in the preferred language of the correspondent.

2. Principles

- 2.1 The principles underpinning this procedure are that the University will:
 - consider external complaints impartially and professionally within reasonable timeframes;
 - encourage informal conciliation where possible;
 - give fair and full consideration of complaints made in good faith;
 - respect the privacy of complainants and disclose only the information necessary in order to process the complaint.

3. Scope

- 3.1 The procedure may be used by anyone external to the University who has been affected by the activities of the University, except where the matter raised falls within one of the categories listed in 3.2 below.
- 3.2 The procedure does not extend to:
 - Human resource issues such as appointments of staff, pay or discipline, where separate procedures exist.
 - Complaints by or regarding members of University staff, where separate procedures exist.
 - Release of information under the Data Protection, Freedom of Information Acts and/or Environmental Information Regulations, where separate procedures exist.
 - Complaints relating to compliance with Welsh Language Standards, where separate procedures exist.
 - Complaints by registered or former students of the University, including those students registered at other institutions on programmes franchised or validated by the University, or by applicants for admission as students, where separate procedures exist.
 - Complaints by parents, guardians, or other friends or relatives on behalf of registered students of the University.
 - Complaints about the Students' Union or its procedures, where separate procedures exist.
 - Contracts, insurance claims and other commercial and financial transactions.

- 3.3 The University reserves its rights not to investigate or take any action in relation to a complaint received anonymously or received on behalf of an anonymous complainant through a third party.
- 3.4 The University will consider complaints which are made in good faith and reserves the right to decline to consider any complaints it considers frivolous, vexatious, defamatory, abusive and/or motivated by malice, or to enter into continuing correspondence about such complaints, and reserves its rights to take any further action which it regards as appropriate in respect of such complaints.
- 3.5 In the event that the University receives a group complaint, or a complaint from a member of a group, then the University requires that one person be appointed to act as correspondent and spokesperson for that group for the purposes of this procedure.
- 3.6 Data Protection legislation prevents the University from handling complaints made by a third party, unless the person wishing the complaint to be made in this way has given express permission.

4. Informal resolution

- 4.1 Complaints can usually be resolved quickly and satisfactorily on an informal basis. If possible, you should contact the member of staff most directly involved with the situation with a view to resolving the issues informally. Such contact should be made as soon as possible and in any event within 20 working days of the situation arising. Advice on the appropriate member of staff to contact is available from the Vice-Chancellor's Office.

5. Making a formal complaint

- 5.1 To lodge a formal complaint you must:
- Where appropriate, have attempted to resolve the issue informally (see 4.1) by approaching the individual directly responsible for your area of concern, and have good reason to consider that the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved.
 - Complete the External Complaints Form (Appendix 1) and submit this within 30 working days of the situation arising.
- 5.2 The Vice-Chancellor's Office will acknowledge receipt of your form normally within five working days, and will arrange for your complaint to be investigated by an appropriate University officer.
- 5.3 The officer appointed to investigate your complaint is responsible for determining the actions needed to investigate and bring the complaint to a satisfactory conclusion. These may or may not include meeting the parties directly involved. S/he will provide a full written response to your complaint, normally within 20 working days. Where the investigation cannot be completed within that time for good reason (such as staff unavailability, or because the matter is complex), you will be provided with a revised timescale.

6. Final review

- 6.1 If you are dissatisfied with the written response to your formal complaint, you may request that the matter is referred to a member of the University's Senior Directorate using the Final Review Form (Appendix 2).
- 6.2 The Vice-Chancellor's Office will acknowledge receipt of your form normally within five working days, and will arrange for the outcome of your complaint to be reviewed by the appropriate member of the Senior Directorate.
- 6.3 The Senior Directorate member is responsible for determining whether the complaint outcome was sound. Her/his conclusions will be provided in writing, normally within 20 working days. Where the review cannot be completed within that time for good reason (such as staff unavailability, or because the matter is complex), you will be provided with a revised timescale.
- 6.4 The decision of the Senior Directorate member is final and there will be no further avenue of review in the University.

7. Monitoring complaints

- 7.1 The University Council, through its Nominations and Governance Committee, monitors the nature and frequency of complaints about the University made by external parties.

THIS PROCEDURE IS ALSO AVAILABLE IN WELSH / ENGLISH

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